



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/584,101	04/05/2007	Wolfgang Guhr	19357-107359	3429
7590 04/06/2009				
Robin W. Asher Clark Hill 500 Woodward Avenue Suite 3500 Detroit, MI 48226-3435			EXAMINER REESE, ROBERT T	
			ART UNIT 3657	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 04/06/2009	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/584,101

Applicant(s)

GUHR ET AL.

Examiner

ROBERT T. REESE

Art Unit

3657

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-13 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4-13 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 05 April 2007 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-8508)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/22/2006

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Inventor's Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This communication is a first Office Action Non-Final rejection on the merits.

Claims 1-13, as originally filed, are currently pending and considered below.

Priority

1. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Specification

2. Claims 4-13 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim 3. See MPEP § 608.01(n). Accordingly, the claims 4-13 have not been further treated on the merits.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 3 recites "the material is plastic sphere-reinforced, comprising particularly glass spheres for re-inforcement." This recitation does not clarify whether the re-inforcement is made of glass spheres or plastic spheres. For the purposes of examination, it will be construed that the spheres are made of glass.
5. A broad range or limitation together with a narrow range or limitation that falls within the broad range or limitation (in the same claim) is considered indefinite, since the resulting claim does not clearly set forth the metes and bounds of the patent

protection desired. See MPEP § 2173.05(c). Note the explanation given by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences in *Ex parte Wu*, 10 USPQ2d 2031, 2033 (Bd. Pat. App. & Inter. 1989), as to where broad language is followed by "such as" and then narrow language. The Board stated that this can render a claim indefinite by raising a question or doubt as to whether the feature introduced by such language is (a) merely exemplary of the remainder of the claim, and therefore not required, or (b) a required feature of the claims. Note also, for example, the decisions of *Ex parte Steigewald*, 131 USPQ 74 (Bd. App. 1961); *Ex parte Hall*, 83 USPQ 38 (Bd. App. 1948); and *Ex parte Hasche*, 86 USPQ 481 (Bd. App. 1949). In the present instance, claim 3 recites the broad recitation "the material is plastic sphere-reinforced", and the claim also recites "comprising particularly glass spheres for reinforcement" which is the narrower statement of the range/limitation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7. Claims 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Schmid (5,702,314).

As per claim 1, Schmid discloses: An automatic belt tensioner (1) comprising a basic part (2) that is connected to a tensioning part (9) so as to be rotatable about a

common axis of rotation (Depicted in Figure 1), a helical spring (13) that is connected to the basic part (2) and the tensioning part (3), and a wrapping bush (20), which is wrapped at least in some areas by a helical spring (13) at a radial enveloping force, characterized in that the material of the wrapping bush comprises reinforced plastic (Column 2, lines 43-51).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

10. Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schmid (5,702,314) in view of Ayukawa (5,470,280)..

As per claims 2 and 3, Schmid discloses all of the technical limitations of claim 1 above.

However, Schmid does not disclose: the material is fiber-reinforced, comprising particularly glass fibers for re-inforcement (claim 2) or that the material is re-inforced with glass spheres (claim 3).

Ayakawa discloses a belt tensioner which has a damping shoe (34) made of nylon and re-inforced with glass fibers (It is construed that glass spheres would also be addressed by this teaching) (Column 4, lines 45-54).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Schmid's device for damping spring vibrations with Ayakawa's use of glass objects in the structure to provide greater strength and durability to the bushing.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Lang et al. (6,468,172) discloses a mechanical tensioner. Tsutsui et al. (6,059,679) discloses an auto tensioner. Golovatai-Schmidt et al. (5,236,396) discloses a friction device. Cura et al. (6,855,079) discloses a bi-directional belt tensioner. Imahura et al. (6,102,820) discloses an auto tensioner.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ROBERT T. REESE whose telephone number is (571) 270-5794. The examiner can normally be reached on M_F 7:30-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert A. Siconolfi can be reached on (571) 272-7124. The fax phone

number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

RTR

/Robert A. Siconolfi/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 3657